

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised to make a number of editorial revisions. Due to the number of changes involved, a substitute specification and abstract have been prepared and are submitted herewith. No new matter has been added. Enclosed is a marked-up copy of the original specification and abstract labeled "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made" indicating the changes incorporated into the substitute specification and abstract.

A proposed drawing amendment labeling Figure 33 as "Prior Art" is submitted herewith under a separate cover letter as required by the Examiner. This drawing amendment does not add new matter to the application. In addition, new formal drawings including the change to Figure 33 are also submitted herewith under a separate cover letter.

Figure 14 has been objected to as containing a reference sign "223" which is not mentioned in the specification. As a result, the specification has been amended so as to include the label "223" at page 41, line 22 of the original specification. It is submitted that this amendment to the specification does not add new matter. Therefore, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claim 8 has been objected to as including an informality with regard to the use of the phrase "each stub." As a result, claims 1-13 have been amended so as to recite "at least one stub," thereby positively reciting that more than one stub can exist. Therefore, the use of the phrase "each stub" is proper. As a result, withdrawal of the objection to claim 8 is respectfully requested.

In addition, claims 1-13 have been amended to make a number of editorial revisions. These revisions have been made to place the claims in better U.S. form. None of these amendments have been made to narrow the scope of protection of the claims, nor to address issues related to patentability and therefore, these amendments should not be construed as limiting the scope of equivalents of the claimed features offered by the Doctrine of Equivalents. Enclosed

is a marked-up copy of claims 1-13 labeled "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made" indicating the changes to these claims.

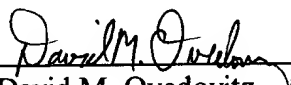
Claims 1 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Brady (U.S. 2002/0003496). Claims 2 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brady. Claims 3-11 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter. The Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter.

Brady was filed on January 19, 2001 and is a continuation-in-part of application serial number 09/585,229, which was filed on June 1, 2000. The present application has claimed priority from Japanese patent application number 2000-106563 filed on April 7, 2000, which is prior to both the filing date of Brady and the filing date of application serial number 09/585,229 from which Brady is a continuation in part. Enclosed herewith is a certified translation of Japanese patent application number 2000-106563, which provides support for at least claims 1, 2, 12 and 13. As a result, Brady is not prior art that can be used against claims 1, 2, 12 and 13 and the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. 103(a) citing Brady are respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that there are issues remaining which must be resolved before allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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